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VOCABULARY AIDS IN THE TEACHING OF CIVICS

Submitted by:

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Bachelor of Science in Education,

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In partial fulfillment of requirements
for the degree of Master of Education

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PART I

THE VOCABULARY PROBLEMS IN THE TEACHING OF CIVICS

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THE VOCABULARY PROBLEMS IN THE TEACHING OF CIVICS

"He is grafting his job from the politician" was a sentence I received this year in a vocabulary exercise in civics. Realizing that our text was overcrowded with new and difficult words, I had selected some of the more important words and presented them to the class. After a class discussion with reference to the use of the expressions in the text, the pupils were asked to use the words in sentences of their own. The foregoing quotation is one of many to prove that the student comprehended the general meaning of the word but was unable to use the new word correctly. Obviously my method was not building a functioning vocabulary.

The problem of vocabulary pursued me inexorably through the unit on government. Of necessity, the use of abstract terms occurred frequently in this section. Expressions like "democracy" and "decentralization" had no concrete meaning to the pupil. Having heard these expressions for years, the student accepted them with perhaps a dim concept as to their true meaning. Such a concept did not lead to the active and complete understanding of our government that is desirable in the teaching of civics.

In addition to dealing with abstractions, the authors of most civics texts appear naturally overwhelmed by the problem of presenting the organization of our government in a limited part of the civics text. This results in the chapters on government being crammed with ideas, facts, and new and difficult words. As many as ten new words on a page is not unusual to find. Often many of these words are easy to comprehend one by one but, when presented in such numbers and with little repetition, a teaching problem is evident.

It is doubtful if many adults would continue to read material which required frequent stops for reference to footnotes, index or dictionary. Yet most of the civics texts necessitate that procedure when explaining our government system.

Although some authors embellish the material with cartoons, sketches, pictures and diagrams, the complicated nature of the information on government dooms most chapters dealing with the subject to a maze of new words and ideas. This condition brings about several disturbing results:

1. The pupil, especially the pupil of average or below average reading ability, partially or completely ignores the new words. Trusting to future teacher explanations, he allows his comprehension of the material to fall short of a satisfactory degree of completion or accuracy.

2. If the student obediently halts to study each and every incomprehensible word, his reading speed and compre-

hension are impaired. "Reading difficulty is caused too, by the needlessly involved manner of presentation of some topics and by the lack of concern for the student's mastery of the technical vocabularly in a number of fields."[1]

3. Bored and irritated by word trouble or continuous teacher explanations of the new terms, his interest in the subject itself noticeably lags.

4. Exercises in the use of the new words may result in practice work in the incorrect use of English.

These four conditions are sufficient to focus the teachers attention on the problem of vocabulary. The undesirability of continuing class work which may produce the unfavorable results mentioned in the preceding paragraph makes a new approach necessary not only in considering the immediate needs of the pupil in comprehending the information on government but also in regard to his complete development as a student now and his preparation for later life. The vocabulary of the civics unit on government is that of an active and intelligent adult citizen; the full comprehension of this vocabulary has a definite future value. Building a student vocabulary of meaningful words is an aid in the ever present problem of the improvement of reading. "Next to teaching a student the proper way to use his eyes, the quickest single method of improving his reading, is to build

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[1] Whitty, Paul, Design for Reading Instruction in the Modern School, The Pocket Magazine, May 1947.

his vocabularly".[2]

In considering the vocabulary problem in the civics unit on government, several factors become evident. The vocabulary problems vary from person to person and from group to group. The experiences of the person or group involved make a difference. The boy whose parents do not speak English is obviously at a disadvantage compared with the boy who hears at home the continued use of good English. The vocational group with their school experiences centered about shop work will have a different conception of words from the college course students who are involved in the intricacies of Latin and Algebra.

The intelligence of the pupils influences the vocabulary problems. A higher intelligence usually indicates a quicker comprehension and a better retention of new words. With the students of average or below average intelligence, the vocabulary problem intensifies as the teacher meets the slower understanding, the shorter span of concentration and remembrance usually characteristic of these groups.

Experience and intelligence merge into the question of reading ability. Reading ability bears a direct and apparent relationship to the vocabulary problem. The varying backgrounds of reading skills coming from the use of different reading systems, the general low status of reading as a

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[2]Lewis, Norman, How to Read Better and Faster, Thomas Y. Crowell Co., N.Y., 1944.

source of entertainment, the association of dictionary work with punishment, the poor oral language backgrounds resulting from continued attendance at the poorer movies and listening to some radio programs complicate the picture without any reference to possible defects in reading skills.

In addition to considering the comparatively tangible elements of the situation - the varying experiences, intelligencies and reading abilities of the civics pupils - one must think about the intangible element of personality. Influencing the comprehension of new words as surely as it influences every other aspect of school life is the element of individual initiative or drive. Often civics books provide illustrations, footnotes, definitions and self helps of various kinds which, although they may not solve the problem, may greatly aid if the pupil will apply himself. Some ambitious pupils will do this and help the situation by evolving specific questions for the teacher. Other pupils with a more passive attitude will ignore all available helps and either rely on the constant attention of the teacher to their problems or abandon the situation as hopeless.

In addition to the varying experiences, intelligence, reading ability and individual initiative, one is conscious of several important factors to be considered in any work at the ninth grade level.

Pupils at this age are in the midst of a period of rapid growth and change. Their consciousness of approaching adult-

hood makes them regard with a cold and suspicious eye teaching devices that would enchant the younger pupil. Conversely, coming maturity does not at this period insure the patient, responsible work of an adult student. Thus at this level the pupils are neither children nor adults but precariously placed between the two phases of life.

The negative aspects of this stage of adolescence are balanced by some positive conditions. Regarding himself as a coming adult, much of the civics material is of interest to the ninth-grader. Some of the information of the civics course offers fairly satisfactory answers to the critical questions of the fourteen-year-old's mind. Being group conscious as never before, he will respond to competitive challenges either as an individual or as a member of the group.

The substance of the teaching problem can be concentrated into one statement: the civics material on local, state and national government involves the use of many abstract and new expressions which should be understood by the restless, competitive and critical ninth-graders of differing experience, intelligence, reading ability and initiative. How can this vocabulary be developed? The ideal way is to provide experiences to insure the natural growth of this vocabulary. Unfortunately, the civics teacher is limited by the consideration of time, space and materials available. Visits to town, county, city, state and national government centers,

dramatizations of governments at work, involved study of related current problems cannot be crammed into schedules already full with other school work, athletics, music lessons, movies and many miscellaneous home and church activities.

Dictionary work has been upheld as the cure-all for vocabulary troubles. Experience generally proves that the ordinary dictionary may be a source of further confusions. "If long steps are required in order to recognize or analyze words, the flow of thought may be interrupted and memory of the content reduced."[3] Sometimes the pupil may not be able to select the proper meaning from the several offered. To a slow child, the relationship between the text and the dictionary may be confused. If the pupil selects the proper meaning, he may use the word ungrammatically. A child with a reading defect often goes astray because he incorrectly spells the word whose meaning he pursues. Civics teachers are often confronted with both a lack of dictionary training and the proper dictionaries with which to give such training.

Many teachers rely hopefully on learning through context. This hope is often defeated by the fact that pupils will just as hopefully ignore what they do not understand or depend too much on a quick guess as to its meaning. Meeting too many new words in rapid succession where ignoring or guessing will not meet the situation, the average pupil will either

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[3]Durrell, Donald D. Improvement of Basic Reading Abilities, N.Y. World Book Co., 1940, Page 162.

give up or memorize meaningless material.

As a last resort, the teacher explains the vocabulary. Embellish the explanations as he will with anecdotes, pictures, blackboard sketches, if the words are so numerous that he must present a large number at a time, the pupil's response will be apathetic. Suggestions that the vocabulary explanations should be related to the background of the child's experience are defeated by the fact that very few pupils have experience related to levying taxes, laying embargoes or passing laws. Some unusual pupils are sufficiently conscious of current problems to be able to realize a relationship between the present political life and the vocabulary on government. These pupils are also among the few who can perceive a connecting link between their seventh and eighth grade courses in history and the subject-matter on government. Unhappily pupils of this type are in the minority.

What can be done with the vocabulary problem? If we view the unit on government as an invasion into a strange land, we can use the orientation technique of service training. My plan is to present a simple work book that will introduce to the pupil a technical vocabulary useful in the study of our units on governments. Presenting only a few words at a time as interestingly as possible in material easily comprehended and directly related to the textbook treatment, a workbook can provide an understandable use of

the more common words found in the textbook discussions on government. Oral, written and interpretive practice in these words is given through discussion questions, word checks, vocabulary reviews and activity suggestions interspersing the narrative material.

The teacher can adjust the workbook to the varying abilities and needs of the pupils. With those of high intelligence and good reading ability, the reading of the workbook could serve as an individual assignment to be done rapidly as introductory or supplemental work to a more involved consideration of the unit on government. With pupils of average or below average ability, the workbook could be used more slowly and thoroughly. More teacher supervision, more careful checking of the reviews provided would suit the slower comprehension of these groups. A concurrent reading of the workbook and text might be advisable with some groups. With a pupil or group of pupils markedly subnormal, the workbook can be used as a text with additional visual aids and activities to vitalize the learning situation.

In constructing this collection of stories and check tests which comprise the workbook, I have tried to bear in mind not only the needs and interests of the ninth grade student but also the fact that, if the workbook is to be generally useful, it must be adaptable to many texts. The study of some of the best civics texts has shown that the material on government is generally approached by three

different methods: (1) One method is based on the comparative size of the unit of government. In this, the material progresses from local to state to national government. (2) The background of the English colonies, the Revolution and the making of the Constitution is used as the approach by other texts. (3) Still others organize the work around the three branches of the government: executive, legislative and judicial. Whichever method is used, a study made of various civics texts reveals a certain basic vocabulary. The workbook which follows is centered about the presentation of a simple basic technical vocabulary in the civics of government.

PART II

THE VOCABULARY WORKBOOK

INTRODUCING OUR GOVERNMENT

By Katherine M. Carroll

A workbook to present a vocabulary useful in the understanding of our government.

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Bill Smith and the Jonesport Field

1.

Bill Smith is disgusted. Bill wants to play baseball with his new bat. When he plays in the street, Mr. Oakes calls the police. The police tell Bill and his friends to play ball on the playground. The playground is a mile away. If Bill walks to the playground and plays ball, he'll be late for dinner at home. Lateness for dinner means he losses 10¢ from his allowance.

Along comes Mr. Dodge, the mailman.

"Hello, Bill. What's bothering you?"

Bill explains his situation.

"Well, life's like that," says Mr. Dodge, "Mr. Oakes isn't feeling well. He has a right to a little peace and quiet. Your mother should have dinner on time so she can get through her work for the day."

"Yes, but how about my baseball?"

"What's the matter with using the Jonesport football field?"

A look of mingled surprise and horror comes over Bill's face as he mutters: "Oh, no, no - not that."

Here's the story on the Jonesport football field.

The Jonesport football field is really all wet. On a clear dry day, you can see the ground. Most every other day

you only see mud and water. "Speed" Smith (Bill's older brother) makes all the touchdowns, "Speed" runs well in the mud. The rest of the squad is tired of letting "Speed" carry the ball. "Speed" is tired of his mud baths.

The squad goes into a huddle. How can they get a dry field? The Jonesport football field is wet because it is on low ground. Two ideas appear: (1) they can get a new field; or (2) they can have this field drained and filled in to make it dry. In the squad's treasury is exactly $29.32 - not nearly enough money to really help the situation. The coach has no authority to get money for this purpose.

Someone says: "Let's ask our Dads."

The first Dad to be consulted is Mr. Smith. He's interested because he hear his wife complain about the mud and laundry situation.

"Well," says Mr. Smith "the football activities come under the authority of the school committee. A group of fathers could go to the next meeting and ask them to fix the field."

"Let's send a lot of people there. Then the school committee will think it's real important and vote a lot of money for it."

"No, our school committee is too wise for that," says Mr. Smith, "It would be better to write up our problem and send a representative to tell the committee about it."

"You can be our representative", suggests one of the squad.

"You want someone who can speak better than I," replies Mr. Smith, "I'll write it up. Let's see if we can get Joe Green's father to take it to the committee."

2.

Mr. Smith wrote a few paragraphs describing the condition of the football field. Many more fathers, neighbors and friends signed the paper, making it a petition. Joe Green's father took it to the school committee.

Jonesport is rather a small town; the school committee is made up of only three members. The superintendent of schools gives information and advice on various problems. Mr. Duncan is chairman and he presides at the meetings.

Before the meeting, Mr. Green told Mr. Duncan that he wanted to bring up a matter. After the important business had been discussed, Mr. Duncan gave Mr. Green permission to speak.

After he read the paper about the football field Mr. Green added a remark of his own: "If you could see Joe after football practice, you would easily see what we mean by all this".

"That field is a disgrace to Jonesport," said Mr. Duncan, "We have to play too many games out of town because it's so wet."

"We need new stands there too," added another member.

"Why don't we drain the field and build new stands?"

"No money," came the chorus.

3.

Every year the superintendent of schools makes up a budget estimating how much money will be needed to run the schools. When Mr. Green brought his petition, the surplus left after necessary expenditures was $200. This was too small an amount to repair the football field. With new stands and a good locker room as well as fixing the field, about $15,000 was needed.

Mr. Duncan suggested that they bring the whole matter up at the town meeting in March.

"The town can vote the money for this purpose", said Mr. Duncan.

4.

Joe Green reported back to the football squad what the school committee had said. They were disappointed. The idea of playing another season in the muddy old field discouraged them.

"What good will a better field do me?" asked "Speed", "I'll graduate this year anyway. Still, I'd like to see Jonesport with a good field."

"I know a trick that will make sure we have a better field and locker rooms, "said Don Jones.

"In the city where I come from all the politicians used to get together in a meeting - they called it a "caucus". Everyone at the caucus belonged to the same party. At the caucus, the politicians decided what they wanted - "put it on the slate." Then they picked out candidates for the next election who promised to support the matters "on the slate". Then the politicians promised all the party votes for these candidates. The politicians got what they wanted and the candidates got the jobs. Why couldn't our Dads hold a caucus, put the football improvement "on the slate" and get candidates into office who would support the "slate?"

"What office?" asked Joe Green.

"Who runs the town?" queried Don.

"We all do", answered Mr. Green, "Everything important goes on the town warrant. At the town meeting in March, everyone gets a chance to talk about the items on the warrant and we all vote on them".

"Then Don's idea about a caucus couldn't be used here?"

"Not in Jonesport. We will get the matter of the football field on the warrant and the townspeople can do what they want at the town meeting." said Mr. Green.

"Boy, I wish it was March now", said Speed.

5.

Next March came soon enough. Item 36 on the town warrant read: "Resolved to appropriate $15,000 to improve the

Jonesport football field; to construct locker rooms on the field for the use of the players and to repair the stands on said field."

The warrant was posted in public places. Quite a few people did not want to pay $15,000 to fix up the football field. Here's what they said:

"It'll raise taxes. $15,000 will make our property tax go higher. We pay $35 per $1,000 valuation now. Let's keep our taxes down."

"Football isn't important. In my day we went to school to study".

"I live near the football field. If they fix it up, big crowds of people will go tramping up there every time there's a game. I like it quiet."

The people who wanted the football field improved became anxious. They thought it was important to get a good moderator for the town meeting. Since a moderator presides at the meeting, a good one gives everyone a chance to speak. They were glad when they heard that Mr. Duncan was to be the moderator.

When the town meeting night came around, everyone flocked to the town hall. Mr. Duncan was up on the stage with the town clerk, Mr. Peters. Mr. Peters kept a record of everything that went on and helped Mr. Duncan in his work as moderator.

The meeting was called to order. Item by item they

discussed and voted on the matters on the town warrant. The football squad was in the balcony waiting for item 36. They were not old enough to vote but were allowed to watch.

Finally Item No. 36 came up. Arguments pro and con (for and against) the football improvements were given. The strongest objection was a possible raise in taxes.

"Our new sewage system will cost us about $20,000. This will raise taxes enough without anything else."

"The welfare department needs $10,000 to take care of the poor folks in the town. That's more important than football."

"We could get the money by a bond issue", said one man". "That will keep taxes down."

("What's a bond issue?" whispered "Speed" in the balcony.

"That's when a town issues bonds. Remember war bonds? You bought bonds from the government and the government promised to pay you in ten years what you put in and 33 1/3% interest. A town can issue bonds the same way. People can buy them and if the town is good, financially speaking, they will be sure of their money back and some interest too."

"Won't it raise taxes when the town pays back the money and interest?"

"Perhaps, but they may be able to pay them back some year when our other expenses are not so heavy.")

The idea of a bond issue seemed to settle the question. Most of the people voted for Item No. 36 providing a bond-issue was made to finance it and some other extra expenses.

They decided to protect the people living near the field from the crowds by passing several traffic ordinances. The selectmen (important town officials) were instructed to talk the matter over later with the chief of police.

6.

Now Jonesport has a good football field. Except in rainy weather, the ground is dry. The squad is happy in the new locker rooms. Fans crowd into the new stands. Jonesport is an important football town again.

Something to talk about:

1. What kind of ordinances would protect the people living in the vicinity of the field?

2. Why does a town need selectmen if all important matters are decided at the town meeting?

3. Why is it worth $20,000 to have a good sewage system?

4. Should the needs of the welfare department come before those of the football squad?

5. Do you think it would be better to raise the property tax than to have a bond issue?

6. What kind of a man makes a good moderator?

7. What is your opinion of caucuses?

8. Why does one good representative often do better than a large group of people ?

Do you know these words?

Fill in the blanks below with these words: ordinances,

selectmen, department, bond issue, moderator, clerk, warrant, property tax, valuation, caucus, appropriate, expenditures, budget, surplus, representative, authority, school committee.

1. All matters concerning the schools come under the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ of the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

2. Mr. Duncan, who presided at the school committee meeting, also acted as _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

3. Mr. Green was a (n)_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ of the football squad, their parents and friends.

4. If the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ of the school department budget had not been so heavy, there would have been a bigger _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

5. When a town votes to _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ money, the money may come from raising the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ or a _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

6. The town people are concerned with the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ of their property.

7. The matters of the sewage _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ and welfare _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ seemed more important than the football field.

8. Being an item on the town _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ made it certain to be discussed.

9. A _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ of politicians sometimes put interesting items "on the slate".

10. The _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ considered by the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ will be recorded by the town _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

Bill's Visit to the County Seat

Remember Bill Smith was disgusted because he had no place to play ball near home? Bill is pretty happy now. Not only can he use the Jonesport football field when the squad doesn't want it but something else has happened. Mr. Oakes, who seemed to complain about the boys playing ball, has died. Mr. Oakes proved he had a kind heart because, in his will, he left some of his property to Jonesport. In his will, he particularly stated that the property was to be used as a playground. Now Bill and his friends will have a regular place to play near home.

Mr. Dodge says they will have to wait until the will is probated.

"What's probated?"

"Wills come under the authority of the county government. The will is sent to a recorder of wills at the county seat. If no one objects to the will, it goes to the Probate Court. Then an official calls it a lawful will, the administrator is named and he sees that the will is taken care of correctly. When all this is done, Jonesport will really own a new playground."

"It sounds pretty complicated. What's a county seat?"

"The county seat is the place selected as the center of the county business. Oxville is our county seat. As a matter of fact, I have an errand in Oxville right now. Want

to come along?"

"Sure thing."

Oxville is just an ordinary small city. The county buildings are near the center. Bill is disappointed because the buildings look old and shabby.

"The counties are pretty old here in eastern United States," says Mr. Dodge, "They were organized when the people first settled hereabouts. In the South, the counties sometimes came before the towns. Because of the big plantations, it was more convenient to do all the business at the county seat rather than at separate villages or towns."

"Are these all of the county buildings?"

"Oh, no. On another street near the railroad is the county jail. There are county schools, hospitals and other institutions like homes for poor folks. These places are located all over the county."

While they were talking a crowd gathers in front of the county court house. Several automobiles drove up. Some policemen got out. One had a man handcuffed to him. They all went into the courthouse.

"There must be a trial opening today. That looks like the fellow they say robbed the Oxville bank."

"Why doesn't his case go to the Oxville City Court?"

"Most serious crimes like his come under the jurisdiction of the county courts. They are the great trial courts of the state."

"Can we go in and see what is going on?"

"Guess so. There won't be much going on today."

Bill and Mr. Dodge find the courtroom. They take seats in the section set aside for the public. Bill saw the accused man sitting at a table talking to another man.

"That's his defense lawyer. He'll try to prove the accused man is not guilty. At the other end of that long table is the District Attorney. He acts as the agent of the state. His job is to protect the interests of the people by prosecuting all persons brought to trial."

"How did they catch this man?" asks Bill.

"That's the work of the county sheriff. The sheriff and the men that work for him got the evidence, found the man, and arrested him."

Then they are silent because the judge arrives. They stand as he come in. The business of the court that day is to select a jury.

The District Attorney and the defense lawyer are both interested in getting jury members whose minds are not made up in advance.

Mr. Dodge nudges Bill. He whispers that they will have to leave.

Outside the courtroom, Mr. Dodge informs Bill that picking a jury takes a long time and he has to be getting back to Jonesport. Opposite them is a door marked "Office of the Coroner".

"Who is the coroner?" asks Bill.

"He is the county officer who investigates accidental deaths. Haven't you been to movie murders and heard them say, 'Call the coroner'?"

As they walk down the courthouse steps, a man comes up to Mr. Dodge. Mr. Dodge introduces him to Bill.

"This is Mr. Atkins, one of our county commissioners. He and two other commissioners manage all the county affairs."

"You mean, we try to," laughs Mr. Atkins, "The local machine does not make things too easy for us."

Bill decides to ask Mr. Dodge about the "local machine" later.

Upon leaving Mr. Atkins, Mr. Dodge points out a building across the street.

"In that building, Mr. Oakes' will is to be probated. After that, you boys will have your new playground."

On the way home, Bill asks about the "local machine".

"That's a nickname for a group of politicians who want to control the affairs of Oxville and vicinity. They bother the county commissioners because they want to get their friends into county jobs. Mr. Atkins and the other commissioners would like people working for the county to be good at their jobs. How would you like it if you went to the county agricultural school and found your teacher didn't know the difference between a rake and a hoe?"

"Did the local machine have anything to do with that

scandal about the county sanitarium?"

"It certainly did. Before Mr. Atkins and these other honest commissioners got into office, the county affairs were handled by some corrupt politicians. They tried to make an unlawful profit by feeding poor food to the patients in the county hospital. When the doctors complained that the patients were getting worse instead of better, the whole dishonest business leaked out. After that, the voters made sure of a decent county by voting for Mr. Atkins and the other commissioners."

"Too bad they let the corrupt politicians in at all".

"Most voters are pretty lazy. They'd rather someone else did the thinking. That's how corrupt politicians get ahead."

Something to talk about:

1. Why do you think it is necessary to have Mr. Brown's will probated?

2. Should the District Attorney prosecute a man if the District Attorney is doubtful of the man's guilt?

3. Why would a coroner be an important official of the county?

4. What kind of a man would make a good county commissioner?

5. Why should Mr. Atkins try to keep machine politics out of county government?

Do you know these words?

You are to underline the expression at the end of each sentence which should be used to fill the blank.

1. Mr. Dodge took Bill to Oxville, the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _. (county seat, county jail)
2. The _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ of wills makes a record of Mr. Oakes' will. (recorder, coroner).
3. The men in charge of all county affairs are the county _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _. (commissioners, sheriffs)
4. The _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ and District Attorney must work together on important criminal cases. (sheriff, commissioner)
5. An important criminal case comes under the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ of a county court. (machine, jurisdiction)
6. In case of a murder, the sheriff would usually call the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ immediately. (probate court, coroner)
7. Wills are one of the matters handled by the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ (probate court, coroner's office)
8. The maintenance of county hospitals would be one of the concerns of the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ (district attorney, county commissioners)

The Inmate of Cell No. 6167

The inmate of Cell No. 6167 is the ex-mayor of Oxville. Here is the story of how he got to Cell No. 6167.

His name is Walter Brownbridge - "Walt" to his friends. His friends were the "boys" of the old party machine. Walt was good to his friends. He gave them easy jobs; he took care of their relatives. He spent thousands and thousands of dollars - the taxpayers dollars - being good to his friends. Walt's friends thought he was just "playing ball", being a good boss. Other people called it misappropriating public finds or misrepresenting expenditures or wasting the municipal revenue. Some impolite people even called it stealing.

Let's consider one thing Walt did. In Oxville, when Walt was mayor, there was a trust fund to support a free library. This money was left in trust to give the city a good library. Walt had three of his friends made trustees of that fund. When the investigators caught up with these trustees, about $15,000 of the fund had been spent on improvements that should have cost $5,000. New book cases that really cost $100 were listed on the books as costing $150 - the trustees kept the difference. That's only one way these trustees made money. Certainly they misrepresented expenditures.

His Honor, Mayor Brownbridge, also thought some rare plants would make the Common more attractive. These rare

plants cost the city $2,000. They died immediately because no one realized that tropical plants cannot stand a cold climate. $2,000 of the revenue from taxes wasted on an ignorant man's whim was too much for most people to overlook.

How did Brownbridge remain mayor for so many years? Walt didn't know much about rare plants but he knew his political machine and how to run it.

Walt was made mayor through machine politics. Machine politics were well organized. Every part of the city - every precinct of every ward - had a boss. The ward boss delivered the vote in his ward. By promise, bribes and threats, the ward boss made sure that the voters in his district voted for the party candidate. Sometimes even dead men voted. These politicians looked up the names of dead people, registered and voted in their names. Nobody noticed. A good many qualified voters didn't vote anyway.

The machine picked Walt to be mayor because he was pretty good looking, spoke well, and he "played ball". They decided on him at a party caucus. They knew he was a good party man because, when he was an alderman (another name for city councilman), he did everything he could to help the party and all the people in it.

"Walt" didn't disappoint the machine either. The majority of the city council were good party men too. Mayor Brownbridge and the city council were on friendly terms. They managed contract ordinances very well. Good party men

or their friends or relatives got all the contracts to do work for the city. When Runty Brothers were voted the contract to construct a municipal bridge, Runty Brothers made sure that the right people received presents. The Mandy Corporation built a new water filtration plant to give Oxville purer water. When they got the new water filtration plant built at a great expense to the city, they needed a new crew of men for maintenance work to conform to the sanitary regulations. Relatives and friends who supported the party got good jobs out of this municipal project. In fact, when Walt was in office, the city seemed to need a great many subordinate employees on many municipal projects.

Mayor Brownbridge and his city council had a good time as executive and legislative branches of the city government. In order to control the judicial branch also, Walt put some of his friends in the city court.

Then one day the citizens woke up. The nice new bridge built by Runty Brothers collapsed because of poor construction. Drinking water tasted and smelled of dead fish. The costly water filtration plant broke down and Oxville had to get its water from a nearby city. A notorious criminal was set free by the corrupt city court. The citizens became angry. They went to work.

Next election a great many people went to the polls who never bothered to vote before this time. Reform candidates won seats on the city council. Walt and his friends were

investigated. Citizens petitioned for a change in the type of city government. The petition was put on a ballot. Everyone voted on it. Within a few short months, Walt was in jail and Oxville had a new city government.

There is no mayor in Oxville now. Oxville has a city-manager. The council hires a man to run the city. This manager hires the people to work in the different departments and on the municipal projects but he can only name someone who has taken an examination and proved that he knows something about the work he does. The city manager must give the city efficient service or he loses his job. Now the city council is elected on a non-partisan ballot - the old party system is out.

Some people in Oxtown would like to change to a commission form of city government. They think it would be simpler to elect five commissioners to run the city. Each commissioner could be in charge of a different city department - Finance or Welfare or Police. One commissioner would act as chairman at their meetings. A lot of people criticize this idea because the commissioners can become too powerful. But wide-awake citizens know how to take care of that. If a commissioner is not doing his work honestly or well, they can draw up a petition to have him put out of office. That's called initiative. When a certain percentage of the voters sign this petition, it is put on a ballot. Referring a matter to the people's vote is called referendum. If the

people vote to remove the commissioner, it is called a recall. The danger of a recall helps to keep commissioners doing their best work.

Old Walt Brownbridge doesn't care whether Oxville has a city manager or a commission form of government. He liked the old mayor-council type of government. In Cell No. 6167, it doesn't make much difference.

Something to talk about:

1. Which form of city government do you prefer? Why?
2. What action would have prevented Walt from wasting so much of the taxpayer's money?
3. Are machine politics ever good?
4. How can contract ordinances be used dishonestly?
5. Why are initiative and referendum important?
6. Which is better - a partisan or non-partisan ballot?

True - False. Write T or F in front of each of the following statements.

_____1. Revenue from taxes is to be used for municipal expenditure.

_____2. A city council has nothing to do with contract ordinances.

_____3. A water filtration plant should be a good municipal project.

_____4. Many subordinate employees are needed for maintenance work in a city.

_____5. Wards are parts of precincts.

_____6. The ordinance was passed at a caucus.

_____ 7. The party machine likes a non-partisan ballot.

_____ 8. Initiative and referendum make government more democratic.

_____ 9. A city manager would usually have to be more careful of city expenditures than a mayor.

_____10. A city commissioner can be removed from office.

Vocabulary Reviews

Town Government

Read over the story of Bill Smith and the Jonesport football field.

Study the following words. If the expression on the right means the same as that on the left, write a capital S between them. If the expressions are different, write a Capital D between them.

Example:

school committee	S	A group of men who look after school affairs.
1. ordinances		Rules about the governing of a town.
2. selectmen		Officers in charge of the sewage department.
3. welfare department		The department in charge of helping poor people.
4. bond-issue		A device for raising money for town activities.
5. moderator		A man who keep the town records.
6. warrant		A paper which lists the items to be considered at a town meeting.

7. caucus	The annual town meeting.
8. appropriate	To give money for a definite purpose.
9. representative	A man who speaks for a group.
10. surplus	A public debt.

County Government

After reading again the story of Bill Smith's visit to the county seat, follow the same directions given under the exercise on Town Government.

1. a will	A paper that gives directions about a dead man's property.
2. county commissioners	Men responsible for all important county matters.
3. a sheriff	A man who probates wills.
4. district attorney	Prosecutes criminals in the county court.
5. coroner	Investigates accidental deaths.
6. local machine	A political organization.
7. probate court	In charge of handling wills.
8. jurisdiction	Under the control of.
9. recorder of wills	A judge in the probate court.
10. administrator	One who arrests criminals.

City Government

Read over the story of Mayor Walt Brownbridge. Follow the same directions given under Town Government.

1. revenue	Money collected from tax-payers.
2. municipal	A political office.
3. council	A body of men making laws for a city.
4. contract ordinances	Having to do with the giving out of contracts.
5. water filtration	Purifying water.
6. precincts	Section of a library.
7. ward boss	A man who directs the politics of a ward.
8. party machine	Makes party dresses.
9. caucus	A meeting of the members of a political party.
10. city manager	A man elected to manage a city.
11. non-partisan	Belonging to one political party.
12. merit system	A corrupt system.
13. initiative	The use of long ballots.
14. referendum	Referring a matter to the voters.
15. recall	Removing a commissioner by popular vote.

Activity Suggestions

1. Make a picture dictionary to illustrate these words.

2. A spelling match. Write these expressions on different slips of paper. Divide the class into teams. When a person draws a certain slip containing an expression, he must define it satisfactorily to win a point for his side. If he cannot, the slip goes to a member of the opposing team. The side making the most points wins.

3. Work up pantomines or charades about the different words.

4. Make a chart. In one column list the word; in another column, copy a sentence from a civics book using the word.

The Sales Tax Fight in the State Legislature

The Governor started a sales tax fight. Many cities and towns found themselves short of money. Expenses were high but they didn't want to raise the property taxes or issue too many bonds. The governor thought a 2% sales tax would be a good idea. A 2% tax on all saleable goods would bring in about $2,000,000 to the state. This money could be distributed among the various cities and towns according to their size. Then the property taxes could be kept down, no more bonds issued, and expenses could be met.

Why were there objections to this idea? First, some

people said it would be hard on the poor people. A 2% sales tax on everything would make it difficult for them to balance their family budgets. Second, the merchants objected. A 2% sales tax meant that they would have to raise prices. Higher prices make a demand for higher wages. A demand for higher wages means labor trouble. Third, the merchants would have to go to a great deal of extra trouble. It would be quite a job figuring up the sales tax and turning it over to the state.

Nevertheless, a bill to provide a sales tax was introduced into the lower house (the House of Representatives) of the State Legislature. With the Speaker presiding, there was a great deal of discussion before the bill was assigned to the Finance Committee for consideration.

The members of the Finance Committee found themselves in a difficult position. Everytime one of them stepped out of the committee room, a lobbyist came up to speak to him. The lobbyist would try to persuade the representative to work for or against the bill. Sometimes the lobbyist just expressed his own ideas; sometimes a lobbyist would represent a pressure group. A pressure group is a number of people organized for some definite political purpose. Many property owners organized into a pressure group to push the sales tax measure through the Legislature. Their lobbyists went up to the members of the Finance Committee and said: "We think the sales tax is just what we need. Why should we property owners

pay all the taxes? Let everyone share in this. If you work to support this measure, you are the kind of a man we will vote for at the next election."

The merchants didn't like the sales tax. Their lobbyists went up to the committee members and said: "We want to keep prices down. A sales tax will raise prices, make extra work, cause demands for higher wages. You keep out the sales tax and we will support you at the next election."

The members of the Finance Committee found peace nowhere. In the committee room, the arguments kept going on and on. Finally one member had an idea: "How about "pigeon holing" it?"

The others looked hopeful for a minute but these shook their heads. The public was too interested in the bill to allow it to be postponed for a long time in a committee room. Besides that, the Governor wanted it.

Someone else suggested that they tuck on an amendment saying the sales tax is only to be used for certain products not bought by everyone. They decided that the amendment idea would not be successful. With the amendment on it, no one would vote for the bill. The amendment would lose the vote of these in favor of the bill; those against it would stay against it.

Without having reached any agreement, the committee members broke up and went home. They found no peace at home either. People kept calling up the representatives; letters

and telegrams were sent to them; delegations visited them. The delegations were representatives of pressure groups.

For days, the Finance Committee discussed the sales tax. Lobbyists and pressure groups continued their work. Meetings were held all over the state. Prominent people debated about it over the radio. Newspapers wrote editorials about it. Advertisements on billboards spoke about it. The sales tax became a war of words. Finally, the Finance Committee decided to favor the tax.

The Sales Tax Bill was put on the Calendar of the House. When the bill came up for discussion, the Speaker asked the chairman of the Finance Committee for a report on the bill. The chairman reported the committee as in favor of the bill. Immediately discussion broke out. The Speaker had a difficult time presiding over the meeting.

Meanwhile, the State Senate (the upper house of the State Legislature) was thinking about this sales tax bill. People were beginning to ask the senators how they felt about it. One senator didn't like it. He thought they could secure more revenue by increasing the state income tax. Another senator suggested a measure to more heavily tax liquor and horse racing. A third senator wanter a compromise measure with 1% sales tax, an increase in the state income tax and heavier taxes on liquor and horseracing.

Most people thought the Governor would veto this compromise measure. The Governor would probably object to the

administrative machinery necessary to enforce it. The state would have to make out, distribute and collect new forms for the sales tax, the new income tax and any other taxes. This would mean hiring additional workers. To the governor, a 2% sales tax would appear much simpler.

Back in the House of Representatives, the views of the senators were repeated in the debates. With a close vote, the bill for the 2% sales tax was passed. The bill went to the State Senate.

The Sales Tax Bill took a trip to the senatorial committee room. Again arguments came thick and heavy. The lobbyists and pressure groups attacked the senators now. One senator suggested using the ballot to decide the question. He said: "Why not refer the whole matter to the voters? That is what we have referendum for. Let the voters decide for themselves." The objection to that idea was that it took too much time.

The Senate Committee decided they would like the amendment added to increase the income tax and to decrease the sales tax to 1%. Many senators objected when this decision was brought to their attention. They claimed the amendment would cause the Governor to veto the bill. With the amendment, the bill would have to be returned to the House of Representatives for revoting. A senator suggested that it would be wise to find out how much revenue would be gained by enforcing the bill as amended. A motion was passed to have

the committee study the bill further with the help of some financial experts to give them accurate information about revenue returns.

Using the figures given by experts from the State Treasurer's and Auditor's Offices, these experts showed that the new idea of a 1% tax and increased income tax would not bring in enough money to meet the needs of the state's towns and cities. Meanwhile, the Governor announced that he intended to veto the bill as amended. Taking all things into consideration, the senatorial committee decided to discard their amendment plan and to favor the 2% sales tax as it was first proposed. After quite a heated discussion, the Senate voted in favor of the Sales Tax Bill. The Governor signed the bill. It became a state law.

Something to talk about:

1. Do you think the sales tax was the best way to secure more revenue?
2. Do you consider that cities and towns should expect help from the state in balancing their budgets?
3. Can you name some good and bad points about lobbyists and pressure groups?
4. Should a governor have veto power?
5. Would it have been better to secure this tax measure by means of initiative and referendum?

Do you know these words? Using the following words, fill in the blanks in the sentences below.

Words: legislature, Senate and House of Representatives, the Speaker, lobbyist, measure, "pigeon holing", Calendar, pressure group, referendum, veto, property tax, revenue, administrative machinery, income tax, state treasurer, auditor.

1. The State_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ is made up of an upper and lower house called the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ and the _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

2. Committees that do not like a _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ will sometimes try_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ it.

3. The _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ of the House should know what bills are on the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

4. A _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ may represent a _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ when he tries to persuade a member of the State Legislature.

5. When a bill requires a great deal of new _ _ _ _ _ _, the governor might _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ it for that reason.

6. If the question was put to the voters by means of a ballot, it would be called _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

7. Two sources of _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ are the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ and the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

8. The offices of the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ and the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ would know about the finances of the state.

The Chief Executive of the State

When the Sales Tax Bill became a law, the Governor was pleased. He was anxious that more of the general public understand the new law. Being too busy himself, he asked the Lieutenanct Governor to make a speech about it. The Lieutenant Governor planned to review a parade of the state militia and speak to a large group of people after the parade. This appeared an excellent chance to reach a number of people.

The Governor must get things organized to take care of the sales tax. This is part of his work as head of the executive branch of the state government. Now that the bill has become a law, the Governor must see that it is administered. Forms are to be made out to send to all the stores in order that individual sales tax returns can be recorded. When the sales tax returns come to the State Treasuer's Office, the money and forms must be checked, the information recorded and the money deposited with other state money. The accounts will have to be checked by people from the office of the State Auditor.

All this administrative machinery requires money. Printing the forms, recording and checking returns mean the expenditure of money for materials and workers. The Governor must add these expenses to the other items in the budget of the executives department. The budget goes to the State Legislature. The State Legislature must vote to appropriate

the state's money for these purposes.

Many people know that the Governor will need more workers to administer the new law. Some of his friends have relatives who would like such jobs. If the Governor gives jobs to relatives of his friends whether they have ability or not, it is called "patronage". Patronage gets votes for a man in political office but it often leads to poor work in governmental agencies. This governor does not believe in patronage. He is requiring that all applicants take civil service examinations. One of the top three on the civil service list can be selected for a position.

One can easily see that the Governor's work is rather complicated. Every year it gets more so. In the old days following the Revolution, the governor was not supposed to have much to do. Under the English colonial system, the governors were sometimes stupid dictators, appointed by the King of England. The Americans hated the system so much that they tried to give much authority to the state legislature. This authority was given in the state constitution.

Every state constitution was very careful to say that the people were the ruling power of the state. In the preamble of each constitution, it says that the "sovereign power is in the hands of the people". The rights of the people are guarded by the bill of rights in the constitution.

Having a governor and state legislature does not take away the sovereign power of the people. The people elect

most of their state officers and rule through them. Because of the complicated ways of our modern life, the work and power of the governor has increased.

For example, he must meet with the Parole Board. A citizen's committee has complained that there are too many criminals on parole and that these paroled convicts are committing many crimes. A recent murder by a paroled convict has brought up this matter.

The State Parole Board must investigate records of criminals who, because of good behaviour in prisons, can be released on parole. (On parole means they are free except that they must report to a parole officer at certain times.) The question of releasing prisoners on parole is a difficult one. All good-thinking people are anxious to give a reformed criminal a chance at a new life. Yet they do not wish dangerous men at large.

The Parole Board is made up of a doctor, a minister, a lawyer and a business man. Today the Governor and the representative of the citizens committee are present. The representative points out that convicts should serve their full terms and that several convicts have been guilty of crimes while on parole. The minister describes the bad conditions in some prisons and the advantages of giving a reformed man a new chance. In the case of the paroled convicts guilty of new crime, the Governor feels that the parole officers, as well as the Parole Board, must be more

careful in checking on prisoners.

The representative also brings in a criticism of the Governor's use of his right to pardon criminals. The Governor explains carefully his reasons for granting pardon. These reasons appear to satisfy the representative. After making some resolutions to check more carefully on paroles, the meeting is adjourned.

Something to talk about:

1. Do you approve of putting prisoners on parole?

2. Under what circumstances should a governor pardon a criminal?

3. What type of man would make a good member of a Parole Board?

4. Do you think a governor should be more powerful than the State Legislature?

5. What rights of the people should be guaranteed by a state consitution?

6. How can citizens be sure their rights are not taken away?

7. Why must the State Lesislature vote on the money used by the executive department?

8. Are state auditors necessary?

True - False. Write T or F in front of each of the following statements.

_____1. The Lieutenant Governor helps the Governor by reviewing tne parade.

_____2. The Governor can spend all the state's money he wishes.

_____3. The executive branch of the state government sees that new laws are administered.

_____4. An appropriation is state money voted for a definite use by the State Legislature.

_____5. "Patronage" is a far better way to secure skilled workers than civil service examinations.

_____6. The state constitution makes the people the ruling power of the state.

_____7. The rights of the people are threatened by the preamble of the constitution.

_____8. A paroled convict usually has a bad prison record.

_____9. The governor can pardon convicts.

____10. A parole officer must check carefully on the actions of the Parole Board.

A Case for the State Courts

The State versus James Brown is the first case on the docket of the County Court this morning. James Brown is the paroled convict who is charged with murdering a man. Let's look into the past history of James Brown.

We first hear of James Brown in one of the justice's courts of the county where he lived. The Justice of the Peace there was thoroughly disgusted with James Brown. Brown was brought to court again and again for committing misdemeanors. Misdemeanors are small crimes. James Brown seemed to be in continuous trouble - first he broke some windows, then he was drunk, then he was in a fight. He was

regarded as an "old faithful" at the court.

At long last, James Brown was charged with robbing a bank of $40,000. This serious crime came under the jurisdiction of the county court, the great trial court of the state. During his trial, Brown claimed he was innocent. The testimony against him was based on circumstantial evidence. Due to the District Attorney's clever presentation of the case and James Brown's past record, the court found him guilty.

James Brown filed an appeal. Since the evidence was circumstantial, his appeal was granted. Being a serious crime the case came under the appellate jurisdiction of the District Appellate Court and then the State Supreme Court. In some states, the District Appellate Court has a different name. (Appellate jurisdiction is the hearing of cases appealed from a lower court). In considering his appeal, the judges used the books of common law for reference. Most of the cases like his on record in the books of common law were convicted. Considering this and James Brown's past record, the Supreme Court upheld the verdict of the County Court. James Brown was sentenced to a long term in prison.

After entering prison, James Brown seemed to reform. He did his prison work well. He attended the prison church, school and library. On account of his good behavior, his sentence was shortened. Eventually, he was considered for parole. Because of his excellent prison record, the Parole

Board granted his release. He was free except to report to a Parole officer at certain times.

A few weeks after he was freed, a man was murdered. This man was one who gave evidence against Brown when he was accused of robbing. When James Brown could not produce a satisfactory alibi, he was arrested.

As the trial opens, Brown looks very discouraged. The case against him is very strong: Brown has no good alibi; several people heard him threaten the murdered man: two men saw him near the place where the murder was committed. In a short time, the jury goes out and reports back with a verdict of guilty in the first degree. There is no appeal granted this time. The Governor refuses either to reprieve his sentence or pardon him. James Brown must die for his crime.

Something to talk about:

1. Is James Brown's case a very strong argument against parole?

2. Would a severe punishment of misdemeanors prevent serious crime?

3. What type of man would make a good Justice of the Peace?

4. Why should a different court have appellate jurisdiction?

5. Are books of common law useful?

6. Do you believe in the death penalty?

Complete these statements:

Underline the part which correctly completes the statement.

1. A paroled convict is one who (a) has been pardoned; (b) is ill: (c) has been released from prison because of good behavior.

2. A misdemeanor is (a) a serious crime; (b) a small crime; (c) a cause of poverty.

3. The Justice of the Peace presides at (a) a small local court; (b) Supreme Court; (c) the meeting of the Parole Board.

4. The docket of a court is like (a) a place where ships are repaired; (b) the Calendar of the House of Representatives; (c) a kitchen utensil.

5. All serious crimes usually come under the original jurisdiction of (a) the Supreme Court of the State; (b) the District Appellate Court; (c) the County Court.

6. All appeal cases from the County Court must go to the District Appellate Court or to (a) the local police Court; (b) the justices' court; (c) the Supreme Court.

7. An appeal is (a) a plea to reconsider a case; (b) a request for a pardon; (c) a letter of confession.

8. Common law is (a) a cheap law; (b) a book of regular laws; (c) books recording past cases of criminal history.

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9. A parole officer is (a) one who checks up on paroled convicts; (b) a policeman who has been paroled; (c) an officer in charge of giving paroles.

10. The right to pardon is given to (a) the judge; (b) the parole officer; (c) the Governor.

Vocabulary Reviews

The Legislative Branch of the State Government

Read again the story of the sales tax. Match the correct numbers and letters of the expressions following on a separate paper.

1. salestax	a. more than half
2. state legislature	b. a list of bills to be discussed by the State House of Representatives.
3. lobbyist	c. a tax on all goods sold.
4. pressure group	d. money collected by taxes.
5. "pigeon holing"	e. a group of men who make state laws.
6. amendment	f. to give up something in order to get something.
7. majority	g. one who tries to persuade legislators
8. Calendar of the House	h. a tax on salaries and other sources of income.
9. revenue	i. an addition.
10. income tax	j. a group organized to influence members of the State Legislature.

11. compromise	k. putting a bill aside.
12. administrative machinery	l. materials and workers set up to administer laws.

The Executive Branch of the State Government

Read again the description of the work of the Governor. Match the correct numbers and letters on a separate paper.

1. lieutenant governor	a. a state army.
2. state militia	b. an officer in charge of checking on paroled convicts.
3. executive branch	c. a system of giving out positions to one's friends.
4. auditor	d. tests to get positions in the public service.
5. administrative machinery	e. one who checks accounts.
6. budget	f. the first part of a constitution.
7. appropriations	g. materials and workers set up to administer laws.
8. patronage	h. money voted for a purpose.
9. civil service	i. a group who decides on the release of prisoners.
10. preamble	j. a governor's assistant.
11. parole board	k. a list of expenses.
12. parole officer	l. the branch that enforces the laws.

The Judicial Branch of the State Government

Read again the case of James Brown. Match the correct letters and numbers.

1. docket	a. a list of cases to try.
2. justices' court	b. the right to free from a court sentence.
3. justice of the peace	c. a small local court.
4. misdemeanor	d. to ask for another court's decision.
5. original jurisdiction	e. a small crime.
6. appeal	f. a delay.
7. appellate jurisdiction	g. the first trial of a case.
8. common law	h. presides over a small local court.
9. a reprieve	i. the right to hear the appeal of a case.
10. pardon	j. books recording past cases.

Suggested Activities

1. Refer to suggestions at the end of the vocabulary review on local government.

2. Dramatize a trial in a state court.

3. Make up riddles about the new words.

4. Draw a comic strip on the life of a bill going through the State Legislature.

5. Make a cross-word puzzle using the words of both the local and state governments.

Our National Government

The National Legislature (Congress)

Fights a Tax Battle

1.

Time: 12 P.M.

Place: the Johnson home

Every window in the house is dark but one. Every room is quiet but one. Everyone is asleep but one. The bright window is the light in Mr. Johnson's study. This room is full of light and small noises. The noises are of rustling papers, the scribbling of a pencil, the suppressed groans of Mr. Johnson. Mr. Johnson is trying to make out his federal income tax.

On his desk Mr. Johnson has the family budget. That tells him how much he needs to keep his family well cared for this year. Then Mr. Johnson has his other tax bills, his poll tax and his property tax as well as his state income tax. When Mr. Johnson thinks of these taxes and all the other indirect taxes like the gasolene tax and the sales tax, Mr. Johnson feels smothered in taxes.

This year Mr. Johnson's position is worse than ever. More money is needed to balance the family budget. Property taxes are up. Prices are up. His salary is higher but not high enough. Mr. Johnson may have to borrow a little money

to pay his income tax. He hates this idea. Borrowing money is wasteful because a high interest rate is charged.

Next morning Mr. Johnson is pale and tired. He meets several of his friends who are also pale and tired. All have been struggling with their federal income taxes.

One of his friends wants action "Let's write to Congressman White. When he was elected last fall, he promised us lower taxes. Where are they? Let's show him we intend for him to keep his promise."

All agree this is a good idea. Many people over the whole country feel the same way. Action is demanded of many congressmen.

2.

The mailman hauled a bagful of letters into Congressman White's office. The Congressman's secretary reads over the letters, handing some of them over to the Congressman. By now, Congressman White knows that his constituents (the people whose district he represents) want a cut in the federal income tax.

Congressman White burns a little midnight oil himself. He writes up a bill to guarantee a 20% income tax cut at all levels of income.

Several days later the bill is given a number and introduced into the House of Representatives. It is called H. R. 906. The Speaker, who presides at all meetings of the

House, turns the bill over to the standing committee on Ways and Means. This committee is always organized to discuss taxation bills.

The representatives on the Ways and Means Committee know that their work is most important. The Constitution - our fundamental law - gives Congress the right to levy taxes. The right to raise money by means of income taxes is given in an amendment of the Constitution.

The politicians as well as the common people are most interested in H.R. 906. Congressman White is a member of the majority party in Congress. One of the planks of his party's platform last November election was the reduction of taxes. When his party had their caucus, they decided that promising to reduce taxes would gain them many votes. It did. They now control a majority of the votes in the House of Representatives and Senate. It would seem an easy job for them to get the bill passed.

There are difficulties. For one thing the "farm bloc" does not favor the bill. The representatives from the farming states ("the farm bloc") are interested in getting federal money to build dams for the control of floods and the providing of cheap power for their farms. A reduced income tax means a reduced budget. A reduced budget may very well mean less money to help the farmers. So the "farm bloc" is against H.R. 906. Some of the members of "farm bloc" are also members of the majority party. If they vote for the

bill, they will lose the support of some of the voters of their districts.

Other representatives think the bill will cause inflation. They reason that the taxpayers with a lower income tax will spend more money. Because goods will then be scarcer, prices will go up. High prices go with inflation.

Meanwhile, Mr. Johnson and his friends are just as anxious to have H.R. 906 passed. They try to influence Congress their way.

The fight is on. Pressure groups on both sides of the question hire lobbyists to persuade Congressmen. Speeches are made over the radio. Arguments appear in the newspapers. Magazines publish articles about the bill. Pity the poor Congressman! His party leader back home says he will lose the next election if he doesn't vote for it. His friends on the "farm bloc" say they won't help him in the future if he votes for it.

The Ways and Means Committee of the House is having a hard time to make up their minds how such a bill would effect the President's budget. The President has asked for a good deal of money to run the government during the coming fiscal year. (A fiscal year is a business year usually beginning July 1st). Besides the income tax revenue, the government expects to get money from duties on imports, tariffs, excise taxes (like cigarette taxes), fines and inheritance taxes. Would cutting the income tax reduce the appropriation of

money necessary for important undertakings? Would it be better to keep the present income tax and use the surplus to reduce the national debt? The committee ponders these questions.

After enduring many arguments, letters, telegrams, and lobbyists the committee finally decides that it is right to support H.R. 906. The bill is put on the Calendar of the House. Soon it comes up for discussion.

The "farm bloc" leaps into action and has the floor many times during the House debates. Their fine speeches will be written down in the Congressional Record.

As opposed to the work of the "farm bloc", the majority party "whip" tries to keep all party members firmly together to support the bill. He succeeds. H.R. 906 is passed by the House of Representatives.

3.

The people working against the bill are now determined to kill it in the Senate. They'll try to have it badly amended or "pigeon holed" when it goes to the Senate committee. Pressure groups get their lobbies working on the senators, - particularly those on the Senate Committee which considers H.R. 906.

Again the "party whip" and the "farm bloc" fight it out. There are more speeches, radio programs, newspaper articles, billboard advertisements.

After a surprisingly short discussion, the committee approves the bill and the majority votes to make the measure a law.

What will the President do?

4.

The President is a member of the minority party. He will not like to see his budget cut by a smaller income tax. He wants all the money for the appropriations he recommended. Yet so many of the voters are clamoring for a smaller income tax. Will he lose his position next election time if he vetoes it?

After thinking it over for several days, the President vetoes the bill.

Poor little H.R. 906! Vetoed by the President, it must now go back to Congress. A 2/3 majority will make it a law. Again the old arguments break out. The House of Representatives votes a 2/3 majority for the bill and H.R. 906 goes to the Senate.

Opposition is stronger in the Senate. Some senators try a filibuster to prevent the vote being taken. They talk on and on but run out eventually. The "farm bloc" speaks strongly of ruined farm lands and hunger if appropriations are cut down by the reduced income tax. The vote of the Senate kills the bill. There are not enough votes to make a 2/3 majority.

Back home, the news makes Mr. Johnson and his friends a little discouraged. They think of more midnight oil to burn over the income tax. But perhaps prices will go down. They decide to be hopeful.

Things to talk about:

1. Give your opinion of pressure groups, lobbyists, party "whips", caucuses, filibusters, "blocs".

2. What kind of a man would make a good Speaker of the House?

3. What would you say in a letter to your Congressman about income taxes?

4. Do you think it would be better to have higher tariffs and lower income taxes?

5. Do you consider building dams as important as lower income taxes?

6. Would lower income taxes cause inflation?

7. Was the President justified in his veto of H.R. 906?

Do you know these words?

Use these words to fill in blanks in the following sentences: poll tax, constituents, the Speaker, standing committee, levy, amendment, minority, majority, planks in a party platform, caucus, "farm bloc", inflation, pressure groups, lobbyists, fiscal year, "party whip", "pigeon hole", veto, override, filibuster.

1. Congressman White had many letters from his _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

2. The _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ gave H.R. 906 to a _ _ _ _ _ _ _ for consideration.

3. The right to _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ taxes is given in the Constitution.

4. In this story, the President was in the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ party; the Congressman White in the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ party.

5. Mr. Johnson had to pay his income tax, property tax and _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

6. The _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ are often decided at the party _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

7. Representatives from farming states were in the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

8. Large spending power plus a small amount of goods may cause _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

9. The majority party worked hard to _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ of the President.

10. The committee wanted to kill the bill so they decided to _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ it.

11. The _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ usually begins July 1st.

12. Congressmen are often approached by _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ about bills in Congress.

13. The Senators who talked and talked to prevent voting on the bill were attempting a _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

14. A number of people who try to influence the vote of a Congressman are usually called a _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

The Chief Executive of Our Country

1.

When the President does decide to sign a bill passed by Congress, it is usually quite an occasion. The President's signing a bill makes it a law. He may sign several copies of the bill, using a different pen each time. Photographers take pictures for the newspapers. Some people ask to keep the pens as souvenirs.

If the President thinks a bill is unwise, he decides to veto it. When he vetoes it, he sends it back to Congress with a message explaining his action. Congress may override his veto with a 2/3 vote making it a law. If the President partly dislikes a bill, he may keep it unsigned over 10 days. Then it becomes a law without his signature. If he keeps a bill 10 days unsigned and, during those ten days, Congress adjourns, the bill is killed. This is called a "pocket veto".

To sign bills or not to sign bills is only one of the President's problems. Every morning his office gets hundreds of letters from all over the country. The President's secretaries go over these letters and only bring to the President's attention those of unusual interest or importance.

Once in a while a mentally sick person writes a

threatening letter to the President. This type of person may think that the Chief Executive is responsible for anything wrong in any part of the country. Every so often a person like this threatens the President with impeachment. Impeachment is accusing a President of something that prevents him from being an able President. Most Presidents take such letters as a joke. The majority of our Presidents have not been seriously menaced by impeachment.

A great number of letters come asking for appointments to various positions in the federal service. In the government of a large country, there are many positions open. Some of these are appointive; others come under civil service. In the old days, all government positions were appointive. That made the "spoils system" possible. Under the "spoils system", a new President discharged most of the people in federal positions and appointed his friends or supporters to do work for which they might or might not be capable. In some cases, the work was so poorly done that it was a waste of money. A reform measure was the setting up of a federal agency called the Civil Service Commission. This Commission provides examinations for many federal positions. This makes sure that the workers have the necessary ability. Civil service workers also have security in office. Appointive positions have no examinations connected with them but there is no tenure of office. A man in an appointive position may be removed by the President at any time. It would be a great

deal easier for the President if all positions were handled by the Civil Service Commission.

After the President finishes his mail, he has a long list of appointments. One type of visitor is particularly trying. This is usually a lawyer who would like the President's pardon for a man or woman who has been found guilty of a crime against the federal government. The lawyer or representative of the criminal generally brings a long list of arguments to persuade the President to use his power of pardon. Sometimes not a pardon but a reprieve - a stay of sentence - is asked. In any event, it is a difficult position for the President. If the President is sympathetic and grants a reprieve or pardon, he may encourage crime. This power of pardon is given to the President by the Constitution.

Things to talk about:

1. If you were President, what information would you want before granting a reprieve or pardon?

2. Can you think of the value of having some federal positions appointive?

3. What would be the disadvantages of the "spoils system"?

4. Under what conditions would you favor impeachment of a president?

5. Of what value is a "pocket veto" to a President?

True or False. Write either T or F in front of each of the following sentences:

_____1. A bill passed by Congress and signed by the President usually becomes a law.

_____2. A "pocket veto" more quickly kills a bill than an ordinary veto.

_____3. Many presidents of this country have been impeached.

_____4. A bill passed by Congress and unsigned by the President for over 10 days generally becomes a law.

_____5. All governmental positions are under the Civil Service Commission.

_____6. An appointive position provides tenure of office.

_____7. The spoils system assures the government of competent workers.

_____8. The President has the power to pardon federal offenders.

_____9. The impeachment of a President is a great honor.

____10. The Constitution gives the President the power to pardon federal offenders.

2.

In addition to mail and visitors, the President must attend many meetings. One of the most important meetings is that of the Cabinet. The Cabinet is a group of ten men who advise the Chief Executive on matters concerning the

administration of the country. Each man manages a different department. The ten departments of the Cabinet are: State, Treasury, War, Justice, Post Office, Navy, Interior, Agriculture, Commerce and Labor. The chart below gives briefly the most important type of work covered by each.

Department	Work
State	In charge of our relations with other countries.
Treasury	Collects revenue; makes our money and stamps; controls trade in drugs, coast guard inspections of ships entering our country and scientific research.
War	Military forces and their training.
Justice	Legal advice; directs U. S. district attorneys.
Post Office	Mail service.
Navy	Naval forces and their training.
Interior	Guarding the resources of our country.
Agriculture	Help the farmers to insure food supplies.
Commerce	Helps trade; handles census every 10 years.
Labor	Workingman's troubles; naturalization and immigration; care of women and children.

Some people think there are too many departments in the President's Cabinet; others say there are not enough. What do you think? Why do you think it is also necessary to have federal agencies?

3.

The President's duties include social occasions as well as business. For instance, today he is motoring to the airport to welcome an important visitor to Washington. The visitor is the President of one of our neighboring countries. The newspapers are very interested in this meeting between our President and the visiting President because the visitor represents a revolutionary party. After the revolution in his country, people wondered if we would recognize the new government. Weeks ago our country showed recognition to the new government by receiving their ambassador officially and sending one of ours to their country. Now our Chief Executive is honoring them further by welcoming their president at the airport.

It is sometimes tiresome for the President to spend time greeting important officials, appointing ambassadors and receiving those of other lands, and signing treaties and agreements with other countries but the Constitution delegates these powers to him. These powers are important because poor relations with another country may lead to war. The President, however, cannot declare war. As commander-in-chief of the Army, he may send our Army into disputed territory. This act may lead to war, but Congress alone has the power to declare war. The Senate must also approve of the President's appointments and the treaties he signs. The writers of our

Constitution wisely made it possible for Congress to check the actions of the President.

Today as the President awaits his distinguished guest, the Secretary of State is with him. The Secretary of State is the Cabinet member in charge of our relations with other countries. As the plane glides to a stop, a military band strikes up and the guard of honor stands at attention. The visiting president steps out and receives the welcome of our highest officials. The party drives through the streets of Washington where crowds of people are out to see the visitor. The drive ends at the White House.

The White House is the center of the national capital's social activities. All prominent visitors are entertained there. Tonight a great dinner and reception are planned. The distinguished guest is shown to a suite of rooms. Later at dinner, he finds not only his host and hostess but a great many other people. Members of the President's Cabinet may be there. Ambassadors and representatives of many other countries will probably attend. The president's wife must be very careful in seating these persons according to rank. The President must not only attend but he is usually required to make a speech. At the reception afterwards, he must attend and greet hundreds of people. It is a colorful occasion but rather trying.

When one thinks of all the bills that must be read and acted upon, all the letters to be read and answered, the

visitors who must be seen, the meetings to be attended, the important guests to be welcomed, the social functions to attend, one can easily understand why fishing is a favorite form of relaxation for a President.

Things to talk about:

1. Do you think $75,000 a year is too much pay for the President?

2. Should the President have less power than Congress?

3. Would a good President send troops into disputed territory?

4. How should a President select an ambassador to go in to a foreign country?

5. Is it right for Congress to be able to control the money spent by the executive department?

6. Would more departments be advisable in the President's Cabinet?

7. How many terms should a President serve?

Completion Work. In your own words, complete the following sentences.

1. An ambassador is
2. The White House is
3. The Secretary of State is concerned with
4. Recognizing a country means
5. As commander-in-chief of the army, the President can

6. Congress can check the President by
7. The President gets his powers from the
8. The work of the Cabinet is
9. The departments of the Cabinet are
10. Some social duties of the President are

The Highest Court in Our Land

SUPREME COURT CALLS LAW UNCONSTITUTIONAL

These headlines startled the nation a few years ago. Congress had passed a bill; the president had signed, making it a law. The judges of the United States Supreme Court studied the law and decided it was unconstitutional. It was no longer a law. This affair reminded people forcefully of the importance of the Supreme Court and constitutional law.

When the writers of the Constitution organized our government, they wanted no branch - executive, legislative, or judicial - to be too powerful. They wanted no dictatorship of any part of the government. For this reason, they tried to balance the powers of the Congress, the President and the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court was given the task of interpreting the Constitution making its meaning clear in order to insure our country's keeping democracy.

The Supreme Court has very important work. A Supreme Court judge must be a learned man. The President, with the

consent of Senate, appoints these judges. There are not many to appoint because the Supreme Court judges serve for life. They are called Chief Justice and Associate Justices. Since the Chief Justice and Associate Justices do not have to worry about getting elected for a new term, it is supposed that they can concentrate better on their work and be more fair in their decisions. Do you think this is so?

When the Supreme Court declared a law unconstitutional, it was using the right of judicial review. A law judged unconstitutional by the Chief Justice and the eight Associate Justices is called null and void. The majority must vote to have a law called null and void. What would a majority vote of the nine members be?

Not many laws are brought before the Supreme Court for judicial review. The Supreme Court has to work on other matters too. They have had both original and appellate jurisdiction in different cases. When representatives of foreign countries are in legal difficulty, the Supreme Court has original jurisdiction. The Supreme Court has appellate jurisdiction in cases coming from the lower federal courts, the Federal District Court and the Circuit Court of Appeals. Persons found guilty of federal crimes in a Federal District Court may appeal to a higher court. The next higher court is the Circuit Court of Appeals. Any appeal from this court comes finally to the Supreme Court.

There are many books written up to record the work of

the Supreme Court. Every important case considered is written up. When a Justice of the Supreme Court does not agree with the vote of the majority on a case, he often writes his opinion. What he writes is called a dissent or dissenting opinion. These dissenting opinions are preserved as well as the other records.

Things to talk about:

1. Why should records be kept of Supreme Court cases?

2. What would be the value of knowing a dissenting opinion?

3. What should the President consider when appointing a Supreme Court judge?

4. What is the difference between original and appellate jurisdiction?

5. Why should the Supreme Court have original jurisdiction in cases involving foreign ambassadors?

6. How does the right of judicial review protect the rights of the American people?

Do you know these words: Use the following words to fill in blanks in the sentences: appellate jurisdiction, original jurisdiction, dissenting opinion, null and void, judicial review, Federal District Court, Circuit Court of Appeals. These expressions may be used more than once.

1. In all ordinary federal crimes, the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ has original jurisdiction.

2. When a case is appealed from the Federal District Court it comes under the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ of the Circuit Court of Appeals.

3. The Supreme Court has _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ in cases involving ambassadors.

4. The Supreme Court has _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ in cases coming from lower federal courts.

5. An opinion which disagrees with that of the majority of the Supreme Court is called a (n)_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

6. A law declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court is called _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

7. A case appealed from the Federal District Court would usually go to the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

8. When the Supreme Court declares a law unconstitutional, it is using the right of _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

Vocabulary Reviews

Legislative Branch

Read again the story of the income tax bill. Match the expressions in column one with those nearest in meaning in column 2. Place the correct letter before the number in column 1.

Example:

__c__ 1. Poll tax

(a) a tax paid to Washington
(b) a barber's tax
(c) a tax paid to a city or town.

Column 1	Column 2
1. constituents	(a) the voters of a district (b) residents of Washington, D.C. (c) officers of Congress
2. the Speaker	(a) presides over the Cabinet (b) a guest orator (c) presides over the House of Representatives
3. standing committee	(a) a committee to inspect stands (b) a permanent committee (c) a new committee
4. amendment	(a) an addition to the constitution (b) a new town law (c) an addition to the White House
5. caucus	(a) a meeting of politicians (b) a loud noise (c) a public official
6. "farm bloc"	(a) a building (b) a number of representatives (c) a farming tool
7. inflation	(a) high prices (b) unemployment (c) plenty of saleable goods
8. pressure group	(a) a social club (b) a politically organized group (c) building inspectors
9. lobbyist	(a) influences legislation (b) builds lobbies for hotels (c) a Congressman
10. fiscal year	(a) a business year (b) a long year (c) leap year
11. revenue	(a) a return engagement (b) money from taxes (c) money for the voters
12. Congressional Record	(a) a daily newspaper (b) a phonograph (c) a written account of the doings of Congress

13. "party whip"
(a) a torture instrument
(b) a leader of political party
(c) a new dessert

14. "pigeon holing"
(a) putting a bill aside
(b) holing pigeons
(c) playing golf

15. veto
(a) a voting machine
(b) a refusal to approve
(c) a Congressional bill

16. filibuster
(a) a law
(b) long speech
(c) an engine

2. Executive Branch

Read again about the President's work. Follow directions as given in the preceding exercise.

1. "pocket veto"
(a) a part of a suit
(b) a bill given a 2/3 majority
(c) a bill unsigned by the President when Congress adjourns

2. impeachment
(a) the execution of a President
(b) accusing a President
(c) guarding the President

3. "spoils system"
(a) distributing jobs to friends
(b) a means of preserving food
(c) a means of passing bills through Congress

4. Civil Service Commission
(a) investigates criminals
(b) examines workers
(c) checks on the President

5. tenure of office
(a) the usual salary
(b) a piece of furniture
(c) security in holding a position

6. the Cabinet
(a) a group of advisers to the President
(b) a group of newspaper men
(c) a piece of furniture

7. ambassador	(a) an elected officer (b) one who represents a country (c) one who represents a company
8. Secretary of State	(a) keeps our national records (b) is in charge of the States (c) is in charge of foreign relations
9. Constitution	(a) the oldest law in the world (b) the fundamental law (c) has been abolished
10. The White House	(a) where Congress meets (b) where all ambassadors live (c) where the President lives

3.

The Judicial Branch

Read again the part about the Supreme Court. Follow the directions of the preceding exercises.

1. The United States Supreme Court	(a) the highest city court (b) the highest county court (c) the highest court in our country
2. Chief Justice	(a) head of the F.B.I. (b) chief judge of the Supreme Court (c) chief judge of the county court
3. Judicial review	(a) the right to say a law is unconstitutional (b) the right to review a Congressman's record (c) the right to judge an army
4. null and void	(a) empty (b) not lawfully binding (c) useless

5. majority	(a) more than half (b) less than half (c) everyone
6. original jurisdiction	(a) the right to judge serious crimes (b) the right to select a jury (c) the control of the first trial of a case
7. appellate jurisdiction	(a) the control of appeal cases from lower courts (b) the control of the granting of appeals (c) the control of pardons
8. Federal District Court	(a) the final court of appeals (b) the lowest federal court (c) the Washington, D.C. court
9. Circuit Court of Appeals	(a) a court which considers cases from the Supreme Court (b) a court which considers cases from the Federal District courts (c) a county court
10. a dissenting opinion	(a) a majority opinion (b) a Chief Justice's opinion (c) an opinion disagreeing with the majority

Activity Suggestions

1. Refer back to those given at the end of the vocabulary reviews of local and state governments.

2. By means of pantomines or charades, show one or more of the activities of Congress, the President or the Supreme Court.

3. Make a series of sketches to illustrate the work of the President's Cabinet.

4. Make a simple diagram of the three branches of our national government.

5. Make a collection of clippings about the national government. Underline words in the clippings that you have learned in this unit.

PART III

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